

THE DESERT PEOPLE

883 As previously mentioned, boys are free to go to other villages when their
494 help is not needed at home. Girls' trips to school on the bus are exceptions to
the rule of constant female chaperonage. Sometimes school children get off
the bus in another village to visit overnight in the home of relatives; mothers
occasionally complain that their daughters stop in other villages rather than
come home to help with the work. However, there is no worry concerning
their safety, for the bus-driver brings word of their whereabouts, and they are
assured a welcome in the home of any relative. Adolescents not in school use
the bus to reach relatives in time of sickness, to help with the harvest, or just
to visit.

883 A young Papago rarely loses his faith in the medicine man, though it may
756 be dormant during any time he spends in boarding school. However, the
adolescents begin to realize that there are some sicknesses with which the
white doctor can cope more adequately than the medicine man. But the youth
makes an ill-defined distinction between white men's diseases and Indian dis-
eases, and he sometimes asks why animals do not seem to make white people
sick. So he is often confused as to what to do when illness strikes and perhaps
tries several courses to be on the safe side: he may take medicine prescribed by
the white nurse in the morning, ask for a half-native rosary service in the
afternoon, and have the medicine men in to sing and communicate with the
spirits at night.

883 On the Reservation the Papago youth has little more contact with whites
430 than he did as a youngster. Tourists have never swarmed to Papago villages as
563 they do to the pueblos, for the Desert People are not romantic in appearance,
571 and their principal extant ceremonies are not open to public view.² Buyers of
cattle and baskets come, but they do not stay long. Older boys, who often herd
the stock while their elders deal with cattle-buyers, have little to do with the
buyers, but they learn what prices to expect and how to bargain.

883 Whites who live on the Reservation—traders, occasional miners, a few mis-
563 sionaries, and government employees—are familiar figures to the youth of
571 districts in which they live or visit often. Adolescents' contacts with these per-
sons are almost entirely impersonal, and few youths make any effort to change
this situation. Some exceptional adolescents will talk readily with whites and
are willing to act as interpreters, but in both eastern and western districts
teen-age boys and girls are likely to face whites with a rather blank expression
and would prefer to watch them unseen. When addressed by a strange white,
the young Papago usually replies with "Yes," "No," or "I don't know." Often
the brevity of the answer is due as much to difficulty of understanding or fear

2. However, many tourists come to see the old mission on San Xavier Reservation.

WHERE THE PICKERS LIVE

221
464
361 The people who move into the irrigated valleys of southern Arizona to harvest the cotton crop must live somewhere while they work in the fields. Like other migrant farm laborers

"During a considerable portion of each year they live perforce in houses or shelters which are not their own homes and in localities which are not their own home communities. Their children must suffer a series of breaks in school attendance and be denied many of the community privileges which are the normal lot of other youth. These conditions are important to employers of migrant workers. Good facilities and conditions help to induce workers to accept employment while bad conditions make it difficult for employers to obtain the workers required."¹

In 1950 cotton harvest hands had essentially two choices in southern Arizona. They could live in cities or towns and ride out to the fields every morning, or they could live in labor camps on the farms and walk to the fields.

464
466
484
494
361 A new pattern of mobility is emerging in the Arizona cotton harvest which would considerably surprise someone familiar with the region a decade ago. Many of the 20,000 or so pickers in Pima and Pinal counties lived in towns and were hauled out to the fields each day in trucks or buses in 1950. Labor contractors recruited these crews, and sent them to the best picking available each day. About two-thirds of the cotton farmers in Pima and Pinal counties paid contractors to haul pickers to their fields.² About a fifth of the farmers in Pinal county hired pickers who lived in towns, but drove their own cars to the fields instead of working under a contractor.³ Actually very few farmers relied on pickers driving to work to harvest their crop--those who did planted small acreages close to towns. Most growers hired anyone who came along in his car along with hands hauled from towns in trucks and those living in camps.

¹Federal Interagency Committee on Migrant Labor, 1947, p. 18-19.

²20 farmers of 31 giving data, 64.5%, in Pima county did.

³26 of 38, or 68.4%, in Pinal county hired such pickers.

⁴39 of 38 farmers giving data hired them--83.7%.

⁵4 of 31 farmers giving information hired them--12.9%.

464
484
494
In Pima county, at least, Papago cotton pickers seem to have become as fully mobile as any other harvest hands. Many Desert People who have moved to Tucson or live there during picking season ride trucks or buses to the fields each morning. The drivers, usually Mexican-Americans, establish regular routes from which they pick up hands, and the Indians are just individuals in a mixed crew of Anglos, Mexican-Americans and Negroes. Some Papago families living in Tucson also move into labor camps on farms.

(463)
(621)
At nearby San Xavier the Desert People can choose either method of working. Those moving out to live in labor camps are generally irrigators and farm handy men who live away from their community most of the time, returning for religious celebrations and visits. Part-time laborers picking cotton usually take an uncomfortable ride to their jobs every day in canvas-covered flat bed trucks that usually have rough benches to sit on. At least one San Xavier man has escaped the bottom of the economic scale by hauling other Papagos to work in his truck even as other contractors.

(184)
(361)
Fewer Papagos ride to work each morning in Pinal county. The proportion of the total picking force hauled from the towns each day is also much smaller than in Pima county. The trading centers do not afford the labor reservoir available in big-city Tucson, nor the housing for migrant workers found in that city. So the greatest part of the harvest labor is housed in camps on cotton farms, and many of the hands hauled from the towns live in what are no more than labor camps thrown up in the trading centers.

464
36
Despite increasing importance of mobile labor that is more efficient in that it can be put to work where most needed, most cotton farmers rely still on pickers living in their own labor camps on their farms. Four-fifths of the cotton farms in Pima and Pinal counties have these camps.¹ A few farmers operated more than one labor camp in 1950--1 farm of every 9 or so has been afflicted with two camps or more.² Some farmers built

¹26 farmers of 34 giving data, 76.5%, in Pima county had camps. 46 of 57 giving data, 80.7%, in Pinal had them.
²72 farms with camps had 88, averaging 1.139 per farm.
46 farms with camps in Pima county had 50 camps.
26 farms with camps in Pinal county had 32 camps.

439
291

[302]
→



The Desert People buy food
in the supermarkets ... the
neighboring Chinese stores.



clothes...

● [494]
→



visions...



and ride back to camp in a truck.

424
1788 for a procession of friars refused to proceed. Most October pilgrims go to Magdalena--about 60% of the Papagos in the cotton fields who made a pilgrimage in 1950.¹ of 2,500 or so cotton picker pilgrims, about 1,500 were bound for Magdalena. If the proportion of reservation-dwellers going to the church where the Apostle of the Pimas, Eusebio Kino, was buried was the same as among cotton picking Papagos, some 600 of them saw Magdalena in 1950. A 2,100 total agrees closely with the estimate this writer made previously of the number of Papagos in Magdalena at fiesta time--2,000.

Papago pilgrims in Magdalena stayed from a few hours to a week. The average sojourn in 1950 was 3 days.² Some hardy souls made a flying trip from the fields one night by bus, performing their duties to the Saint during the following day, and returning that night, reported back to work next morning. But usually the Desert People spent from 1 to 2 days traveling to and from Magdalena--a half day trip from Tucson including customs and immigrations formalities on both sides of the border.

494
484
788 About half the Papagos visiting Magdalena in 1950 traveled by bus--Greyhound in the U. S. and Transportes Norte de Sonora in Mexico.³ Slightly less than half reached the fiesta on trucks, paying just over \$7.00 on the average for this rough-and-ready transportation.⁴ A few of the Desert People still made the slow wagon journey from their reservations to Magdalena in 1950, but authorities on both sides of the international boundary frowned upon the practice, and Mexican officials closed their border to wagons.

486
641 U. S. citizens entering Mexico are required to obtain "Tourist Permits" identifying the individual and entitling him to remain in that country for six months. Practice in regard to Papagos crossing the border has varied greatly in both Mexico and the United States because of difficulties in determining citizenship of Indians often speaking neither English or Spanish who may have been born on either side of the border and not know which. The migrations of the Desert People between

(Text continues on p. 90)

¹ 14 of 24 whose pilgrimage goal was obtained went to Magdalena, 61%.

² Dobyns, 1950, p. 28. Contains fuller description of The Fiesta of St. Francis at Magdalena.

³ Based on information from 8 individuals and observation of hundreds at Magdalena.

⁴ Based on 5 of 11 giving information, much observation.

⁵ 5 of 11 individuals giving data came by truck, paying \$7.15 apiece roundtrip on the average.

466
484 reliable but they're more trouble--you have to take them to town, to the store, and you have to look after them more than the others.

197
597
432
439
273 The Desert People working in the cotton harvest meet farmers and other laborers under very special conditions in labor camps and fields. But for a few hours in the week they come into contact with a much wider range of Anglo-American culture in trading centers where they shop. They enter into the buyer-seller relationship prevalent in our society, in stores of many kinds. They go to movies. They sit by trucks that haul them to town and watch the colorful harvest season crowds. They seek sympathetic or predatory men to buy liquor for them, since legally they cannot purchase it themselves. Then, they drink it as fast as possible so they won't loose the poor quality liquor they've been overcharged for if they're arrested. As a result they generally become staggering drunk and are arrested, contributing both cash and labor to the city governments of trading towns--and giving their tribe a black eye. Their few hours in town on Saturday afternoon make a deep impression upon the observant Desert People.

484
439
[441] In Pima county, large-city Tucson is shopping day goal for Papagos. They take a bus into the city about once a month. These are the shopping trips remembered by the Desert People, for in talking about their shopping, they didn't bother to mention more frequent trips to stores in Sahuarita or Marana where the center of town is no more than a general store or two and a garage.

In Pinal county the Desert People usually shop in the trading center nearest the labor camp where they live. The main shopping towns are Casa Grande, Eloy, Piescho, and Stanfield and Maricopa. The first three are towns of about 4,000 inhabitants. The others are "wide places in the road." To some extent Papagos go there, or to country stores at Friendly Corners, El Centro, etc., most of the time, looking forward to a trip to one of the towns every couple of weeks or once a month. The Indians go to one of the business centers Saturday afternoon, usually for 3 hours or more.

15 individuals giving information averaged 25.2 days between shopping days in Tucson.

18 Papagos giving information went to town every 7.4 days on the average.